

FIELD CROPS

POTATO ACREAGE, PRODUCTION AND STOCKS

FLORIDA

SPRING: Production in the Hastings area is forecast at almost 4.3 million hundredweight, down 39 percent from last year. Acreage expected to be harvested at 17,000 acres is down 4,000 acres from a year ago. Yield is forecast at 250 hundredweight per acre, down 24 percent from the 1999 yield.

Production in other spring crop producing areas is set at almost 1.8 million hundredweight, down 7 percent from the 1999 production. Although acreage to be dug is equal to a year ago, yield is forecast at 250 hundredweight per acre, down seven percent from last year's yield of 270 hundredweight per acre.

Although dry soils hindered germination of oldest seedings, mild weather and the lack of a winter freeze spurred nearly ideal growth and development of the spring crop acreage. Oldest plants are lapping the middles around Hastings. Crop conditions in the Hastings area are variable depending on the amount of rain received recently. Heavy showers at the end of March severely damaged some acreage, especially in Flagler County. Losses are currently being assessed. Harvesting in the Hastings area is expected to start in mid-to-late April.

WINTER: Winter crop production totaled 1,840,000 hundredweight, down one percent from the 1,860,000 hundredweight produced a year ago. Yield averaged 230 hundredweight compared with the 1999 yield of 200 hundredweight. Acreage harvested totaled 8,000 acres, down 1,300 acres from the 1999 acreage harvested. Nearly ideal weather during the winter crop growing and harvesting season helped increase the yield.

UNITED STATES

WINTER: Production of California and Florida winter potatoes in 2000 is estimated at 4.72 million cwt, up 3 percent from the January

forecast and 16 percent above last year. Area for harvest, at 17,000 acres, is down 6 percent from January and 4 percent from a year ago. The average yield of 278 cwt per acre, is up 22 cwt from January and 49 cwt from a year ago.

California's growing season was relatively good. The winter crop developed without significant frost or disease problems. California yields improved 20 cwt per acre from the January forecast and were well above a year ago, but harvested acreage was down from January.

SPRING: Spring production in 2000 is forecast at 21.4 million cwt, down 15 percent from comparable totals last year but 2 percent above 1998. Area for harvest is estimated at 80,800 acres, down 4 percent from last year, and 10 percent short of 1998. The average yield is forecast at 264 cwt per acre, down 36 cwt from last year's comparable yield but up 31 cwt from two years ago. Program changes for crop year 2000 combines Alabama spring production with their summer estimate and will be published in June. North Carolina combined their spring and summer estimates into the spring forecast.

Acreage in California is estimated to be up 3 percent from last year. Cool, wet weather in February slowed germination and growth in some areas, although most of the crop is progressing normally. Harvest should start in late April or early May and continue through mid-July. Yields will average 340 cwt per acre, well short of the record high in 1999. Arizona's acreage for harvest is forecast at 11,000 acres, up 15 percent from a year ago. Harvest started in early April in Yuma and should be underway by the end of the month in Central Arizona. In Texas, conditions are dry, but potatoes look good at this time. North Carolina's former summer crop will be included in the spring season estimate this year. Combined acreage figures indicate a 3 percent decline in overall acreage. North Carolina's planting was ahead of normal, with 98 percent planted by early April.

POTATOES

Seasonal group and State	Area				Yield per acre		Production		
	Planted		Harvested						
	1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000	1998	1999	2000
	1,000 acres				Cwt		1,000 cwt		
Winter									
California	8.5	9.0	8.5	9.0	260	320	1,540	2,210	2,880
Florida	9.6	8.2	9.3	8.0	200	230	1,440	1,860	1,840
Total	18.1	17.2	17.8	17.0	229	278	2,980	4,070	4,720
Spring									
Alabama ^{1/}	1.7		1.6		175		221	280	
Arizona	10.0	11.0	9.6	11.0	315	290	2,268	3,024	3,190
California	19.0	19.5	19.0	19.5	400	340	6,198	7,600	6,630
Florida	28.8	25.0	28.0	24.0	315	250	7,358	8,820	6,000
Hastings	21.5	17.5	21.0	17.0	330	250	5,758	6,930	4,250
Other	7.3	7.5	7.0	7.0	270	250	1,600	1,890	1,750
North Carolina ^{2/}	17.0	17.5	16.5	17.0	200	200	3,325	3,300	3,400
Texas	10.3	9.8	9.8	9.3	235	230	1,751	2,303	2,139
Total	86.8	82.8	84.5	80.8	300	264	21,121	25,327	21,359

^{1/} Spring estimates to be combined with summer starting with 2000 crop year. ^{2/} Summer estimates combined with spring starting 2000 crop

POTATO STOCKS DOWN 3 PERCENT

April 1, 2000 potato stocks totaled 128 million cwt, down 3 percent from a year ago and 5 percent below two years ago. Storage accounted for 30 percent of fall production, down 1 percentage point from a year ago.

Disappearance from the start of harvest to April 1 totaled 293 million cwt this season, up slightly from last year and 5 percent above two years ago. March disappearance of 42.5 million cwt was slightly above last year and 2 percent above two years ago. Seasonal shrink and loss of 27.9 million cwt was up 2 percent from last year and 10 percent above two years ago.

Processing of 1999 crop potatoes so far this season totaled 146 million cwt, down 2 percent from the 1998 crop but 6 percent above the 1997 crop. In March, processors in the eight major States used 20.5 million cwt of potatoes, down 2 percent from last year but 4 percent above 1998.

Eastern States stored 8.11 million cwt of potatoes on April 1, 2000, up 20 percent from a year ago but 2 percent below two years

ago. Maine's holdings were up 20 percent, Pennsylvania's were up 33 percent, and New York's stocks were equal to last year.

Central States accounted for 22.3 million cwt of potato stocks this April, down 21 percent from a year ago and 10 percent below 1998. North Dakota's stocks were off 41 percent from last year, Minnesota's stocks dropped 30 percent, and Wisconsin's stocks were down 6 percent. Michigan's stocks were up 23 percent from a year ago and the Nebraska - Ohio combination was up 40 percent.

Western States held 97.2 million cwt of potatoes in storage on April 1, 2000, up 1 percent from last year but 4 percent below 1998. Oregon's stocks were up 29 percent from a year ago, but were offset by a 5 percent decline in Washington and a 4 percent drop in Idaho. Stocks in the three Northwest States were the same as last year and accounted for 66 percent of U.S. stocks. Colorado's stocks were up 9 percent and California's potato stocks were up 17 percent from last year. Montana's stocks, mostly seed, were off 5 percent.

POTATOES: Quantity used for processing, eight States, 1997-99 ^{1/}									
State	Crop year	To Dec 1	To Jan 1	To Feb 1	To Mar 1	To Apr 1	To May 1	To Jun 1 ^{2/}	Entire season
1,000 cwt									
Idaho and Malheur County, Oregon	1997	26,880	33,950	41,050	49,470	57,620	65,750	76,410	91,450
	1998	27,510	34,700	42,670	51,210	60,040	68,550		92,860
	1999	27,970	34,490	40,790	49,220	57,820			
Maine ^{3/}	1997	1,250	1,720	2,265	2,735	3,355	3,900	4,705	5,870
	1998	1,430	1,935	2,530	2,985	3,595	4,180		5,945
	1999	1,375	1,670	2,310	2,995	3,640			
Washington and Other areas, Oregon	1997	28,580	33,990	38,690	46,400	53,720	59,780	74,190	76,930
	1998	33,630	38,890	45,650	53,290	60,930	67,180		83,730
	1999	33,440	39,620	45,500	53,350	61,080			
Other States ^{4/}	1997	11,645	13,960	17,115	19,905	23,515	26,365	31,635	37,842
	1998	11,615	14,550	18,150	20,900	24,710	27,855		37,662
	1999	11,785	14,495	17,295	19,970	23,480			
Total	1997	68,355	83,620	99,120	118,510	138,210	155,795	186,940	212,092
	1998	74,185	90,075	109,000	128,385	149,275	167,765		220,197
	1999	74,570	90,275	105,895	125,535	146,020			

^{1/} Total quantity received and used for processing regardless of the State in which the potatoes were produced. Amount excludes quantities used for potato chips in ME, MI, MN, ND, and WI. ^{2/} Data not available prior to 1998. ^{3/} Includes Maine grown potatoes only. ^{4/} MI, MN, ND, and WI.

FALL POTATOES: Production and Stocks on April 1, 1999-00 ^{1/}						
State	Crop of 1998			Crop of 1999		
	Production	Stocks April 1, 1999 ^{2/}	Percent of production	Production	Stocks April 1, 2000 ^{2/}	Percent of production
California	3,708	1,200	32	4,005	1,400	35
Colorado	25,360	9,300	37	25,762	10,100	39
Idaho	138,000	52,000	38	133,330	50,000	38
Maine	18,060	6,000	33	17,813	7,200	40
Michigan	14,648	2,200	15	14,963	2,700	18
Minnesota	21,170	6,700	32	18,020	4,700	26
Montana	3,180	1,740	55	3,325	1,650	50
Nebraska	8,175			8,904		
New York	7,290	350	5	6,758	350	5
North Dakota	28,670	10,500	37	26,400	6,200	23
Ohio	1,200			987		
Oregon	26,229	10,500	40	28,020	13,500	48
Pennsylvania	3,360	420	13	3,080	560	18
Washington	93,225	21,500	23	95,200	20,500	22
Wisconsin	30,895	7,800	25	34,000	7,300	21
Other States		1,010			1,410	
Total 15 States	423,170	131,220	31	420,567	127,570	30

^{1/} Stocks include processor holdings and seed to plant 2000 potatoes; 1999 crop seed usage totaled 29.5 million cwt.^{2/} Nebraska and Ohio combined into “Other States”.